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COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

MAINTENANCE OF THE ROSTER OF EXPERTS

Note by the secretariat

1. Article 24, paragraph 2 of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) provides that: "The Conference of the Parties shall establish and maintain a roster of independent experts with expertise and experience in the relevant fields. The roster shall be based on nominations received in writing from the Parties, taking into account the need for a multidisciplinary approach and broad geographical representation."

2. By decisions 18/COP.1 and 13/COP.2, the Conference of the Parties (COP) decided to establish and maintain a roster of independent experts on the basis of the procedures attached to decision 18/COP.1.

3. In accordance with decision 19/COP.1, the secretariat requested Parties to supplement their submissions to the roster of independent experts (ICCD/COP(1)/6/Add.1) to ensure that under-represented areas are addressed in the roster, in particular by:

(a) Making the roster more balanced in terms of gender equity;

(b) Ensuring better representation of relevant disciplines, particularly in the areas of anthropology and sociology, health sciences, legislation, microbiology and trade; and

(c) Increasing representation of experts from non-governmental and international organizations.

4. The COP requested the secretariat to ensure that the roster be made available in electronic form, as well as through the regular channels of the United Nations system, for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of information. The ecretariat has accordingly placed the roster on its web site at <http:\\www.unccd.de> together with a dynamic search facility. It has in addition prepared a CD-ROM for distribution to those Parties which do not have access, or practical access, to the web site of the secretariat.

5. The roster, containing nominations received up to 31 August 1999, is to be found in document ICCD/COP(3)/14/Add.1, annex I. Revisions and updates to the roster received by the secretariat through diplomatic channels by 15 October 1999 will be displayed in the above-mentioned web site. These and new revisions and changes will be reflected in future editions of the roster.

6. In accordance with article 24, paragraph 2 of the Convention and decision 18/COP.1, the selection of experts to be included on the roster is based on nominations received in writing from the Parties through diplomatic channels, taking into account the need for a multidisciplinary approach, an appropriate gender balance, broad and equitable geographical representation, and expertise and experience in fields relevant to combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought. Decision 18/COP.1 also requires that the roster reflect the diversity of knowledge and skills needed to provide advice on combating desertification and mitigating the effects of drought, taking into account the integrated approach of the Convention and expertise from grass-roots organizations and non-governmental organizations.

7. In preparing to compile the list of nominations, the secretariat developed a format for curricula vitae together with an indicative list of disciplines (ICCD/COP(1)/6/Add.1, annex II, as updated in document ICCD/COP(3)/14/Add.1, annex II). Document ICCD/COP(3)/14/Add.1, annex I, extracts the country of submission, name, gender, institution and major disciplines of experience or expertise of the nominees, while annex III contains an indicative list of disciplines and annex IV reflects the general characteristics of the roster.

8. The roster shows that:

(a) The list comprises 1,371 experts;

(b) Experts are nominated by 61 Parties;

(c) Of the 61 Parties, 23 submitted in excess of 20 nominations each, namely, Algeria, Brazil, Chile, China, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Egypt, France, Germany, Ghana, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, Niger, Pakistan, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Spain and Turkey;

(d) Adequate representation is lacking (i.e. less than 2 per cent) from the following disciplines: legislation, biology, health sciences and trade; and

(e) There are 1,189 men and 182 women. Men thus represent 87 per cent and women 13 per cent of the experts listed.

9. Bearing in mind the relevant provisions of the Convention and the procedures for the establishment and maintenance of the roster of independent experts, the COP may wish to consider any recommendations from the Committee on Science and Technology regarding the development of the roster, including possible guidance to the secretariat as to steps to be undertaken to achieve further balance in terms of geographical distribution, disciplines and gender representation.

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